



A Report on the 2006 Legislative Session

To my constituents of the **5th Legislative District**

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Dear Friends & Neighbors,

Thank you for taking time to read my newsletter – I hope it finds you well.

After 59 days, 2,204 bills introduced, 391 bills passed, and many great debates in committees and on the House floor, our **2006 legislative session has concluded**.

This session we made **great progress** in the areas of **strengthening our laws against sex offenders, helping students achieve state standards, funding local transportation projects, and eliminating state park fees**.

Unfortunately, the 2006 session also saw some great ideas for addressing our health care crisis and unfriendly business climate go ignored, in addition to unprecedented spending in our state budget.

My priorities as your state representative continue to be **investing in our children's education, keeping our communities safe, revitalizing our economy, easing traffic congestion, and ensuring our health care system is accessible and affordable**. I'll touch on some of these issues in this newsletter.

It's important I stay in touch with you. Unfortunately, this is the last newsletter I'll be able to send in 2006 due to election-year restrictions. However, **I encourage you to contact me** with any questions or comments as I'm allowed to respond should you contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks for allowing me to be **your state representative** – it's an **honor and privilege**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay Rodne".

Rep. Jay Rodne

Representative Jay Rodne

Helping students succeed in our public schools



Academic standards and the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL)

I've heard from many constituents who strongly support our academic standards, but have concerns with the WASL.

One of my priorities this year was to find ways to assist students who are struggling with the WASL by developing alternative pathways for them to achieve state standards. That's why I was happy to support the following measures that passed because I think they'll go a long way in assisting our students, parents and schools:

- **\$20.2 million for additional instruction** for those students in the class of 2008 who did not pass portions of the WASL;
- **Diagnostic testing for students** to find and address their learning gaps;
- Creation of a **student-centered planning program**;
- Reviewing viable options for equally rigorous **career and technical education alternatives**; and
- **Studying why students struggle** on all sections of the WASL.



"Fund education first" in the state budgeting process

Our state constitution declares public education is the **"paramount duty" of the state**. Further, our courts have been clear on our duty to define and fully fund basic education as our primary commitment.

Yet, **our state budgeting process is not structured to accommodate these mandates**.

I supported legislation this year that would have required a K-12 education budget be passed and sent to the governor before the Legislature could allocate funding for other programs. This **"fund education first"** approach would **provide a stable and adequate funding stream while eliminating the need for future tax increases** to meet the state's K-12 funding obligations.

If **education** is truly our **"paramount duty,"** which I firmly believe it is, then this needs to be **reflected in our state budgeting process**.

The importance of math for our schools, workplaces and future

Research shows children that do well in math, in addition to other courses of study, do well in life. **Well-developed math skills are important to future job opportunities** in all sectors of our economy.

Unfortunately, **our current math curriculum is questionable**. In fact, we are barely in the international top ten in math proficiency.

I have proposed our state adopt the **Singapore math model** which is the **global "gold standard"** for math curriculum and instruction. The children of Singapore rank number one in the world in internationally-normed math skills. **This model is a full sequence from elementary school through high school**.

This concept is something I'll continue to push for in the Legislature because it's in **the best interest of our students and future**.



Eliminating state park fees

You will no longer have to pay a \$5 fee when you visit our beautiful state parks. This fee was eliminated this legislative session and it was the right thing to do for the people who enjoy our state parks each year. I supported this measure.

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5th District



Protecting families from sex offenders

I hosted a community forum in Issaquah last October on sex offender registration, sentencing and monitoring. Through input from this event and numerous meetings with law enforcement, prosecutors, victims, and other concerned citizens, I worked in a bipartisan manner this year to pass a comprehensive sex offender law that will go a long way towards protecting our children and making our neighborhoods safer.

House Bill 3277, which I co-sponsored, strengthens our sex offender laws by imposing 25-year minimum sentences for sexual offenses – including rape, molestation and indecent liberties with forcible compulsion – against children younger than 15, developmentally disabled people and vulnerable adults.

I'm proud to have played a leading role in this legislation. I also supported other sex offender bills that passed which will:

- Boost penalties for child pornography;
- Require electronic monitoring of certain sex offenders; and
- Prohibit sex offenders from living within two blocks of schools.



Addressing our regional transportation needs

Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) process

We continue to face transportation infrastructure challenges that are only getting worse. Addressing Central Puget Sound's regional transportation needs now is critical to ensure that our economy continues to improve and strengthen.

The transportation package passed in 2005 is expected to generate around \$8.5 billion for statewide transportation projects. None of the major projects funded – Alaska Way Viaduct, SR 520 bridge replacement, I-405 expansion, and new SR 167 interchange – can be completed without approval from the public through the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) process.

Through the RTID process, voters in the Central Puget Sound region will be asked to decide whether to approve a comprehensive package to complete the financing for regional transportation projects initiated at the state level in 2005. This measure will likely go to the ballot in 2007.

I will provide more information on this important issue in future legislative updates.

State Route 169 designated a highway of statewide significance

I'm very pleased to report that House Bill 3266, which I prime sponsored, passed this legislative session. This legislation designates SR 169 as a highway of statewide significance. This designation is crucial when it comes to state prioritization, regional funding and making the SR 169 corridor safer and less congested in the future. I'll keep you apprised of its progress.



Representative Jay Rodne



“Get Connected” to your government

I'd like to remind you of a **resource I have created for you**. The following link takes you to a guide for local and state government. I think you will find this “**Get Connected**” resource useful.

<http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/members/rodne/newsreleases/Rodne-Connecthandout.pdf>



Rep. Rodne studies the details
of a bill in the House Chamber.

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